

- **Jobless rate hits record low (4.3%) in June**
- **The value of BC building permits up 16.1% in May**
- **Median age of BC's population expected to reach 46 years by 2031**

Population

- **By 2031, BC's population is expected to be over 5.6 million and the median age will increase to about 46 years (+6.7 years since 2005).** In 2005 almost 14% of BC residents were aged 65 or older and this figure is expected to increase to about one in four by 2031. The proportion of BC residents under the age of 18 will drop to about 16% by 2031, down from about one in five today. The major factor driving population growth will be migration to British Columbia, with international migration accounting for 64% of the population gain.

There are substantial regional differences in projected population growth. Regions in western and northern Vancouver Island are expected to lose population, as will the Central Coast, Powell River and Kootenay-Boundary areas. The regions that are expected to experience a decline tend to be those that are heavily dependent on resource extraction industries. Squamish-Lillooet is expected to see the strongest growth, but the Okanagan, Lower Mainland and the eastern portion of Vancouver Island will likely also grow faster than the provincial rate.

Data Source: BC Stats Population Projection (P31)

Labour

- **British Columbia's unemployment rate dropped 0.4 percentage points to a new record low of 4.3% (seasonally adjusted) in June.** The improvement in the jobless rate came as the labour force shrank (-0.6%) between May and June and the number of jobs remained relatively unchanged (-0.1%, or a net loss of 1,800 jobs).

Alberta (3.5%) and Manitoba (3.6%) continued to be the only provinces with a lower incidence of unemployment than BC. Jobless rates in the rest of the country ranged from 4.9% in Sas-

katchewan to 14.8% in Newfoundland. The Canadian unemployment rate held steady at 6.1%, as the number of jobs was virtually unchanged and the number of people either employed or looking for work shrank by a mere 0.1%.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **The province's goods producing industries (-2.3%, seasonally adjusted) took on less workers in June.** Employment increases in construction (+1.1%), utilities (+8.6%) and forestry, fishing & mining (+3.2%) were not able to offset a shedding of employees in manufacturing (-5.3%) and agriculture (-10.6%).

Meanwhile, employment in the service sector advanced 0.5%. Among those who took on more workers were retail & wholesale trade (+1.3%), education (+2.0%) and health & social services (+2.7%). However, there were job losses in public administration (-5.6%) and professional, scientific & technology services (-4.0%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **There were fewer jobs for men (-0.4%, seasonally adjusted) and more for women (+0.3%) in June.** The private (+0.4%) and public (+0.6%) sectors took on a smaller number of workers, while fewer people were self-employed (-2.4%). Full-time employment (-0.3%) decreased slightly, but the number of part-time workers increased (+0.9%) for the first time since February. The job market remained favourable for young people (aged 15-24) as their unemployment rate slipped to 7.6%.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **There were more jobs across all regions of the province except Northeast (+0.0%, 3-month-moving average) in June.** Kootenay (+4.9%) led the job creation in the province. Other regions to see significant job growth were North Coast

Did you know...

Nearly six in ten Canadians (57%) consider themselves to be "highly" or "very" knowledgeable about personal finance issues and 84% use credit cards *Source: Ipsos-Reid Canada*

& Nechako (+3.0%) and Mainland/Southwest (+1.0%).

Unemployment rates were down in every region except Kootenay (5.7%). Jobless rates ranged from 4.1% in Mainland/Southwest to 6.6% in Cariboo. BC's biggest urban centres also reported lower incidence of unemployment.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

The Economy

- **The value of building permits issued by BC municipalities rose 16.1% (seasonally adjusted) in May, following a 27.8% downturn in April.** The increase was due to planned activity in the non-residential sector (+61.7%), while residential permits were down (-1.8%) slightly. Permits for institutional & government buildings more than tripled (+216.8%), with less substantial increases in the value of permits issued for commercial (+20.9%) and industrial buildings (+20.5%) projects.

Although permits were up in May, the increase was localized in the Vancouver area, where building intentions jumped 25.2%. Both Victoria (-9.6%) and Abbotsford (-31.2%) posted significant declines. Vancouver accounted for more than fifty percent of the total value of building permits issued in May.

Canadian permits were up 6.9%, as increased activity in the more populous provinces, such as Ontario (+5.4%), Quebec (+3.8%), Alberta (+3.3%) and BC offset slowdowns in other parts of the country. The value of permits issued in Canada's non-residential sector jumped 18.1% in May while permits for residential projects inched up (+0.7%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Compared to the same period last year, the value of building permits issued by BC municipalities was up 11.9% during the first five months of 2006, with increased activity in every region except Nechako (-3.7%).** In the rest of the province, increases in the value of permits ranged from 3.2% in Thompson/Okanagan to 93.9% in North Coast, where residential, industrial and commercial building permits were up significantly from last year.

Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

Nutrition

- **In 2004, British Columbian adults (aged 19 and over) received about 23% of their daily calorie intake in snack foods, more than they obtained from breakfast (18%).** Findings from the Canadian Community Health Survey indicate that BC children aged four to 18 received more calories from snacks (29%) than both breakfast (18%) and lunch (23%), and almost as many as they got from dinner (30%).

Caloric consumption patterns were generally similar across the country. Over 41% of the calories that Canadians received from snacks came from the "other food" category, which includes things like soft drinks, chocolate bars, and potato chips. Approximately 31% of Canadians' daily calorie intake was comprised of fat in 2004. The "sandwich" category which consists of things like pizza, hamburgers, submarines and hot dogs was the main contributor, accounting for 16% of daily fat intake. "Sweet baked goods" such as cakes, doughnuts and cookies, accounted for about 9% of total daily fat intake. Many Canadians ate less than the five recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables in 2004. Seven out of ten children aged four to eight did not meet the minimum suggested intake.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Youth and Education

- **In 1999, 77% of young British Columbians aged 18 to 20 had graduated from high school and by 2003, 89% of the same group (by then aged 22 to 24) had managed to complete their high school education.** In 1999, the Youth in Transition Survey interviewed approximately 20,000 Canadian youth aged 18 to 20 and then re-interviewed the same group in 2001 and 2003 to measure their subsequent educational and workforce activity. There were some proportional differences between young men and women. In 2003, 84% of the BC's male participants had graduated, while 94% of their female counterparts had their high school diploma in hand. This was fairly close to the Canadian averages for male (86%) and female (92%) graduates of the same age in the same year.

Data Source: SC Cat. #81-595-MIE2006045

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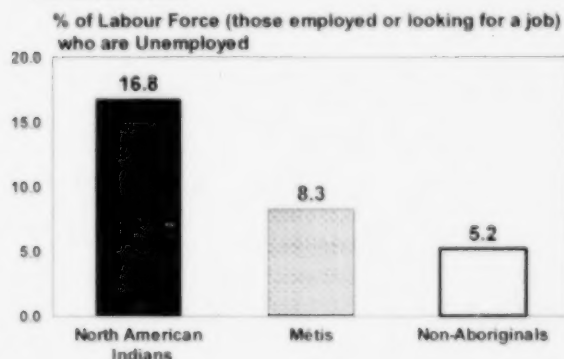
Labour Market Characteristics of the Off-Reserve Aboriginal Population in British Columbia

For the 12-month period April 2005 to March 2006

Since April 2004, Statistics Canada has been collecting data through the monthly Labour Force Survey on the labour market status of Aboriginal peoples living off-reserve in the four western provinces. In order to get more reliable information for the British Columbia component of the survey, the province of British Columbia sponsored an increased sample which was phased in from October 2004 until March 2005. From April 2005 to March 2006, the survey continued monthly at its maximum level of respondents. Thus, for that 12-month period, the most reliable labour market data covering a full year¹ was produced on the off-reserve North American Indian and Métis populations living in BC. For this reason, BC STATS decided to release a summary of the data for this unconventional time period.

The expanded sample of Aboriginal peoples in the Labour Force Survey has made it possible to provide estimates of their labour market characteristics at 3 sub-provincial areas of the province; 1) the Large Metropolitan Areas of Vancouver, Victoria, Abbotsford and Kelowna; 2) the South, excluding the large metropolitan areas; and 3) the North. There are also tabulations of where the First Nations, who live off-reserve, reside in the province by First Nations Groups and by Band

The Unemployment Rate for Aboriginal peoples remains significantly higher than for non-Aboriginal people. The pattern seen in this chart is typical of the ethnic groups' relative labour market successes.



In this chart of comparative unemployment rates from the LFS, the inequity between the Aboriginal Groups and non-Aboriginals is indicative of the profile revealed by Census data over the years. The relative success in the labour market of North American Indians, Métis and non-Aboriginal people follows a very consistent pattern in all the standard measures used to measure labour market success—unemployment rates, employment rates, wage rates, occupation distribution, skill levels, et cetera—a pattern that shows North American Indians in BC are considerably disadvantaged compared to the non-Aboriginal population and the Métis group falls somewhere in between.

So much of the inequity can be attributed to the large discrepancies in the three groups' education attainment. Only one out of every ten prime-age persons in the non-

¹ Census produces far more reliable estimates but the data measures the labour market conditions for only the month of May every five years.

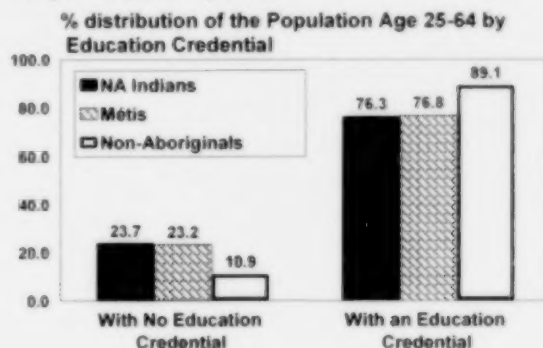
Aboriginal population has not attained at least some form of education credential compared to one out of every four Aboriginal persons. The impression of the adjacent chart is that North American Indians and the Métis have very similar education profiles. However that is not the case. The Métis are more polarized, showing a large proportion without a credential but among those with a credential, the level of their credential is higher.

Across the whole population, persons who finish high school and then obtain a post-secondary credential are more successful in the labour market than those with only a high school diploma or a post-secondary credential. Most people with a post-secondary credential but no high school have obtained a post-secondary credential that has minimal value in the workplace. For example it might be an Adult Basic Education certificate, which is the equivalent of a grade 10 or grade 11 standing, without any additional vocational skills. There is a relatively high incidence of North American Indians who are in this situation.

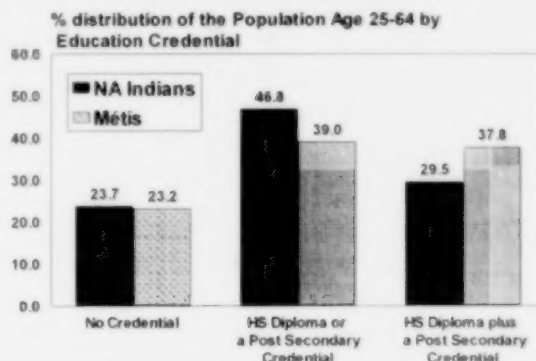
The third chart on this page shows the extent that differences in education levels dictate labour market success. Using the employment rates as the indicator of success, when the education levels are standardized² the gap in the probability of having a job is decreased significantly. In fact there is virtually no difference in employment rates between the Métis and the non-Aboriginal populations who have a high school diploma plus a post-secondary credential.

² The sample size is too small to fully standardize by education level. Distortions remain because the quality of the post-secondary credential varies considerably between the three groups. The non-Aboriginal group has a higher percentage with a university degree than do the Métis, and the Métis more so than North American Indians.

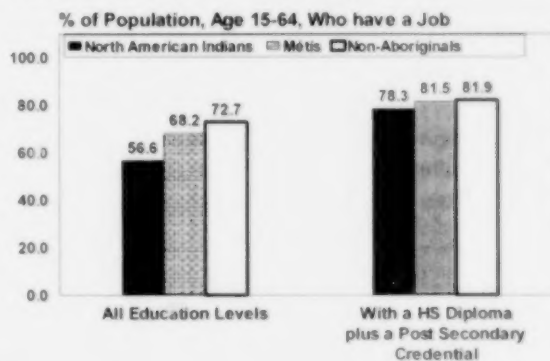
The different levels of education attainment goes a long way in explaining the inequality in the work place between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. However, according to this simple breakout, it appears as though the Métis and NA Indians have very similar education profiles.



But when the type of credential is broken out, it becomes obvious that a far larger proportion of Métis have obtained both a high school diploma plus a post secondary credential.



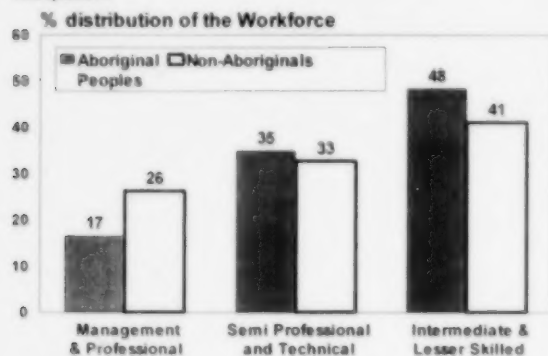
The inequity in labour market outcomes among the three groups, as measured by the proportion of the working age population who have a job, is almost eradicated when the comparison is done on the well educated population.



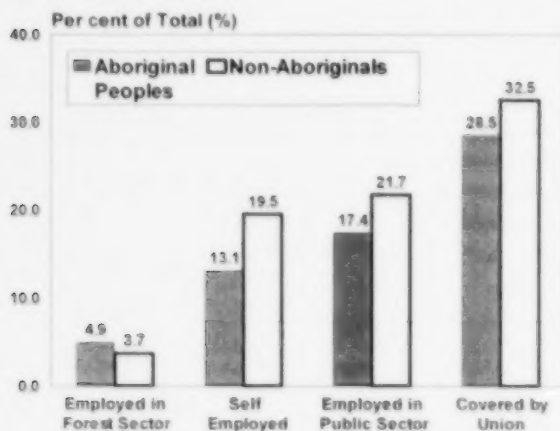
In the large metro areas of BC, the differential in the work profiles of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people is not as extreme. However, the low employment rates of North American Indians indicate they are an extremely disadvantaged group throughout BC, particularly in the North.



As one would expect, given their differing levels of education attainment, Aboriginal people are under-represented in the higher skilled occupations and over-represented in the lower skilled occupations.



Other Job Characteristics



While the patterns of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal labour market inequities exist throughout the province, the difference in employment rates between North American Indians and non-Aboriginal people in Northern BC is particularly daunting. In a part of the province where three out of four prime-aged non-Aboriginal persons are able to find work, not much more than one in two (53%) North American Indians are able to do so. The Métis in the North also seem to be having problems relative to the Métis in other parts of BC as well as to the non-Aboriginals in the region. On the other hand, in the large metro areas of the province, the Métis appear to be almost as successful at getting work as the non-Aboriginal population. Click here to view a map of the Regions.

The disparity in educational attainment means the skill levels of the jobs that are available to Aboriginal people are considerably lower than those available to non-Aboriginal people. Few Aboriginal people have university degrees, so most of the professions are not accessible. Aboriginal people are more than equally represented in the Technical group of occupations, particularly in the trades. Four out of 10 of the Métis work force are in this occupational group.

Other interesting information gleaned from the data is that Aboriginal people are more likely than non-Aboriginal people to work in the forest sector; Aboriginal people show lower representation in the public sector and lower levels of unionization which both can be explained by the fact that they are less likely to work in the health and education sectors which consist primarily of unionized, public sector jobs. Relatively fewer Aboriginal people are self-employed because fewer are in the professions and the professions have the highest incidence of self-employment.

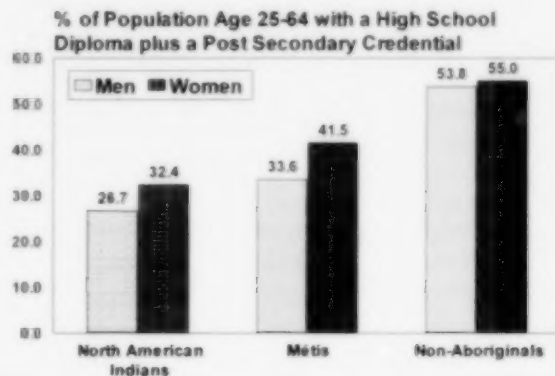
The gender differences in educational attainment are also of interest. The women in off-reserve Aboriginal communities far surpass the men in their education levels. Forty-two per cent of Métis women have completed high school plus post-secondary, well ahead of the men where only 34 per cent have achieved the same level. There is considerably more equity in the education levels of men and women in the non-Aboriginal community.

The relative wage rates between the Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal groups reflect the relative education levels of their populations. Thus it is not surprising that non-Aboriginals earn so much more than Aboriginals. However, the gender difference in wages between the groups is quite interesting.

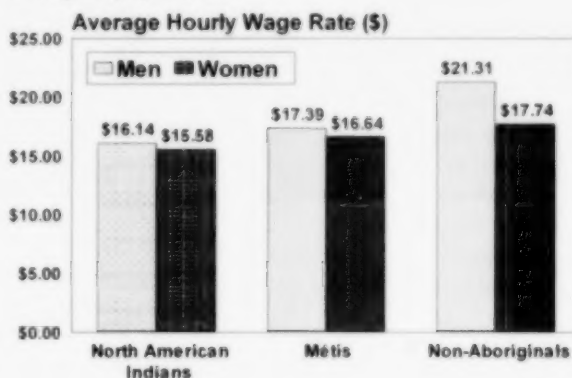
Among the non-Aboriginal community, men earn \$3.57 more than women while there is a minimal difference between Aboriginal male and female wage rates (North American Indian men earn only \$.56 more per hour). But that smaller male/female wage gap in the Aboriginal communities is not indicative of greater gender equality, as the Aboriginal women's education levels are so much higher than the men's. When their differences are standardized by education levels, the wage gaps are as pronounced as they are among non-Aboriginal people.

Hope for the future comes from the fact that Aboriginal people are returning to school in their adult years. The percentages appear fairly small at 7 per cent but that is on a yearly basis. If 6 per cent of all Aboriginal adults complete a post-secondary credential each year, their education attainment levels could improve very quickly.

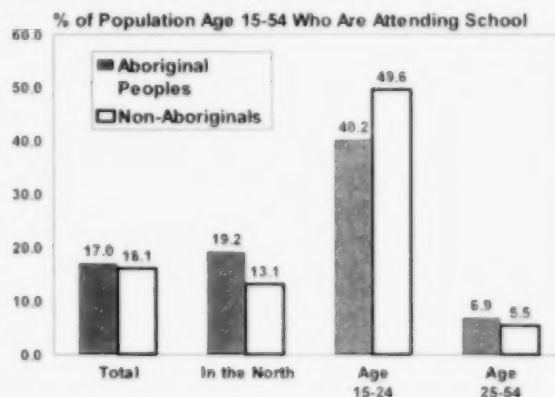
Among the Aboriginal populations, the women are significantly better educated than the men.



The fact that Aboriginal women are so much better educated than Aboriginal men probably explains why their gender wage gap is less pronounced than that for the non-Aboriginal population.



Aboriginal population over the age of 25 are more inclined to attend school than the non-Aboriginal population.



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<i>BC at a glance . . .</i>		
POPULATION (thousands)	Apr 1/06	% change on one year ago
BC	4,292.2	1.3
Canada	32,501.1	1.0
GDP and INCOME	2005	% change on one year ago
(BC - at market prices)		
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$ millions)	168,011	6.8
GDP (\$ 1997 millions)	144,028	3.5
GDP (\$ 1997 per Capita)	33,853	2.2
Personal Disposable Income (\$ 1997 per Capita)	20,693	2.5
TRADE (\$ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Apr	3,721	-2.6
Merchandise Exports - Apr	2,774	-5.8
Retail Sales - Apr	4,414	1.3
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on one year ago	12-month avg % change
(all items - May 2006)		
BC	2.3	1.9
Vancouver	2.3	1.7
Victoria	2.2	2.1
Canada	2.8	2.4
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)	Jun '06	% change on prev. month
(seasonally adjusted)		
Labour Force - BC	2,289	-0.6
Employed - BC	2,192	-0.1
Unemployed - BC	97	-10.2
		May '06
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	4.3	4.7
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	6.1	6.1
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jul 5/06	Jul 6/05
Prime Business Rate	6.00	4.25
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.60	4.75
- 5 year	6.95	5.70
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jul 5/06	Jul 6/05
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn \$	1.1117	1.2362
US \$ (reciprocal of the closing rate)	0.8999	0.8083
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE	Jun '06	% change on one year ago
(industrial aggregate - dollars)		
BC	722.67	3.1
Canada	726.66	3.6
SOURCES: Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, } Statistics Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Canada Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca		

BC and Regional population projections

Projected population to 2031 for British Columbia and a variety of small regions within B.C. (P.E.O.P.L.E. 31).

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/pop/popproj.asp#admin

Regional employment projections

BC Stats, with the financial assistance of the Ministry of Advanced Education, developed the Regional Employment Projection Model (REPM), designed to project industrial and occupational employment in regions of the Province of British Columbia.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/iss/repm.asp

Socio-Economic Profiles & Indices 2005

Updated annually, this body of work provides a coherent and relatively comprehensive measurement of social stressors at sub-provincial areas. Charts, tables and, within the indices, consolidated rankings, make the information broadly accessible.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/index.asp

Released this week by BC STATS

- Small Business Quarterly, First Quarter 2006
- Tourism Sector Monitor, June 2006
- Labour Force Statistics, June 2006
- Earnings & Employment Trends, June 2006

Next week

- Exports, May 2006

